

Mitchell, E M

May 1916
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E. M. MITCHELL

← FLORIST →

ONTARIO GARDENS

SPECIALTIES:

All Sorts of Hardy Perennials, Roses, Clematis and
full line of Greenhouse Flowering and Foliage Plants

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Port Hope, Ont. May 8th

Canada

1916

Principals Falconer

Dear Sirs I am enclosing you a portion of a letter received from my son who went to England with the last body of students under the belief that they would get commissions in the British Army if they passed the necessary examination. As you will see there seems to have been a grave misunderstanding in this respect and the endeavor to compel them to enlist as privates is rather a low down piece of business. It is probable that you may be already informed in this matter but it seems only right that I should be well known as other bodies of students may be induced to go over under the same conditions which they certainly would not do were the facts known. There is surely ample room in Canada for all who wish to enlist as privates without going to England to do so. I am informed from another source that some of the first body of students who went over with the promise of commission were kept hanging around till their

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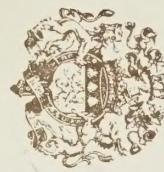
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stocks of cash (probably not large in some cases) were exhausted when they were of necessity obliged to enlist as privates. From a later letter from Frank he says several stocks became interested in their case and they are now with the 2nd Canadian Division at Shorncliffe and he has promised to do what he can to help them out of their difficulty. No thanks however to the British War office which seem in this matter & have been guilty of attempted sharp practice to say the least of it. Damage from us will

E M Mitchell



6.
be set out to work for us and send
a very strong official letter to the War
Office. The committee also meant to
see Mr. Carson, then Sir George's representative
in England and see promised Stalwarts
also. To make a long story short, I
think we will be able to do better
than we were ever expected to offer.



Our next likely be able to obtain

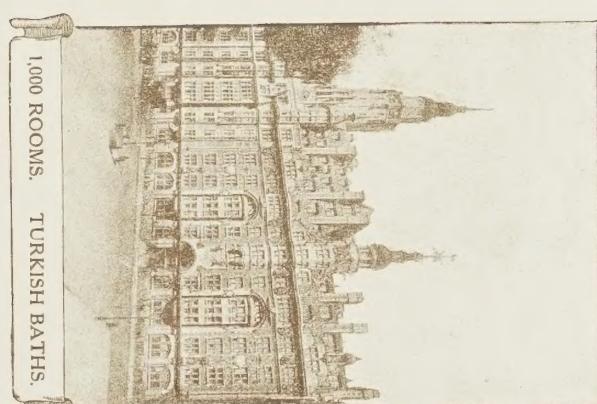
in the Canadian Army institution of the
British Army if we fail, it would be
so bad embarking with the Canadian
British private who is the British
muss, that would we are in training
another getting of 3. per day, we will be
get 1.0, being Canadian private per. day.

Our committee is strong

10-day at 1.0. per day

Our arrangements are expected to

IMPERIAL HOTEL,
LONDON.



TELEGRAMS: RUSIMP. WESTCENT. LONDON.
TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 3400.

The IMPERIAL HOTEL
Russell Square,
London, W.C.



we sighted the coast of Ireland and
Ireland sight about 6 p.m. Saturday

April 8, and the next afternoon at

3 p.m. dropped anchor in Liverpool

harbor, being the first ship to see
the land north for three days, it
having been closed on account of German
sub. operations, so we were mighty thankful
to know at last that we were about
safe in England. We embarked about

12.45 p.m. Monday, and had a train

at 2 a. m. for London, arriving here about 8. We were all so tired, from lack of sleep that we did not see much of the city that day, though I went to Hyde Park, Buckingham Palace, Parliament Buildings, & Westminster Abbey.

We reported at the War Office on Tuesday, and then our real trouble began. A good many of our fellows had applied for artillery & engineers and had been practically promised commissions in those branches, but when we got to the military Italy of Hailies, we were informed that there were no openings in any but infantry corps, and also that any who failed in the exams. (though they are not hard) would have to enlist as privates in the British army. Through some characteristic staff blunder negotiations between Ottawa & London had gone wrong, but that was not our fault, so we told them we wouldn't stand for that & refused to finally sign up under those conditions, in doing which I think we were perfectly right, even if the War Office doesn't like it. We then appointed a reliable committee of four to look after our affairs & they are doing splendidly. They went to see Gen. Perley himself and stated their case, after hearing which he exclaimed that it was perfectly absurd! Notwith-

May 10th, 1916

E. W. Mitchell, Esq.,

Port Hope.

Dear Mr. Mitchell:

I am sorry to find from your son's letter that he has been disappointed in the treatment that he received from the British War Office on his arrival in England. Unfortunately Colonel Lang through whom the arrangements were made is out of town this week, and will not be back until some time next week, but I will take up the matter with him and find out how this trouble has arisen. I always understood that former members of our Officers' Training Corps who went across for Commissions in the English Army were practically assured before they left that they would be granted commissions. Certainly if for any reason they were rejected by the British Army they should be then granted their full freedom either to apply for a commission in the Canadian Army or to enlist where they will. When I learn anything further I will correspond with you.

Yours sincerely,

President.

May 15th, 1916

F. V. Mitchell, Esq.,

Port Hope, Ont.

Dear Sir:

I have made inquiries from Colonel Lang with reference to the complaint of your son with regard to the disappointment of those who went over to England in the second draft for commissions in the Imperial Army. I have had a full report and am glad to say that the matter has been cleared up in what I think is a satisfactory way, though undoubtedly there was reason for disappointment at the time.

The Colonel informs me that General Gwatkin has written to him from Ottawa that owing to a mistake in the decoding of the cable from the War Office the chief disappointment originated. General Gwatkin himself was informed that if these candidates did not pass for commissions at the Cadet School they would not be held to serve in the ranks of the British Army. This has now been confirmed and hereafter candidates who fail to qualify for commissions will be at the disposal of the G.O.C. Canadians at Shorncliffe.

The Officer who went over in charge of No. 2 draft also has sent a full report outlining the troubles that they had and the way in which they were corrected through the help of the High Commissioner of Canada. As a result these candidates are at present attending the Canadian Military School at Shorncliffe, and those who qualify will obtain commissions in the Imperial Army as under the old regulations. Those

who do not will be under orders from the O.C. the Canadian troops. These candidates have also been advised by the O.C. the C.E.F. in England to put in individual claims for expenses incurred en route. I hope that this difficulty which we all regret has now been cleared up.

Yours sincerely,

President.

